

FIFTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

OF THE

MAINE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,

WITH THE MINUTES OF

THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING,

HELD IN HALLOWELL,

On the 6th and 7th of February,

1840.

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BRUNSWICK:

PRESS OF JOSEPH GRIFFIN.

## REPORT.

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IN presenting their Fifth Annual Report, the Executive Committee of the Maine Anti-Slavery Society, would express their devout gratitude to God for the measure of success which has attended, during the year past, the means employed for the promotion of the cause of the slave in the State.

### LECTURING AGENTS.

The Committee greatly regret that they have not been able to increase the number of lecturing agents during the year. The cause has continued to receive the highly valuable services of Mr. I. Coddington, as General Agent of the Society, and Mr. C. L. Remond. Though the General Agent has necessarily been diverted for no small portion of time from the business of lecturing, by calls upon his attention in the management of the general concerns of the Society, yet much new ground has been broken up, and a large amount of active service in the field has been performed.

### ADVOCATE OF FREEDOM.

In accordance with the vote of the Society, at the last Annual Meeting, the Committee have changed the Advocate from a semi-monthly to a weekly paper. As was expected, the change diminished the number of subscribers to about 1000. The number has since increased and with rapidity of late, and now amounts to about 1300. The paper has been, for the year, an expense to the Society of about \$300. With the hearty co-operation of the friends, and with an Editor, whose time and talents are now exclusively devoted to it, the paper doubtless may for the future be made to sustain itself. It is universally admitted to be of vital importance to the rapid pro-

gress of the cause, and no effort should be spared to increase its power and extend its circulation.

#### DEPOSITORY AND BOOK AGENCY.

In the early part of the year, the Committee engaged the Rev. D. B. Randall for the purpose of raising funds for the establishment of Depositories of A. S. publications, and as general Book Agent. Unfortunately Mr. R., in consequence of severe illness, was obliged to leave the service of the Society soon after his appointment, and just as his plans had become well matured for the successful discharge of his duties. Through the active instrumentality of our General Agent, the sum of \$1,000 has since been subscribed for the purpose of establishing a Depository in Augusta. Books to the amount of \$700 have been purchased. For the last three months the Committee have employed Mr. J. Barron, as agent for the sale of books. Libraries have been established by him in twenty four different towns, and a large number of individual publications, especially, "Slavery as it is," have been put in active circulation.

#### NEW SOCIETIES.

Several important new Societies have been formed within the year, the precise number of which, however, the Committee have not the means of stating. Meetings of County Societies have been held with good effect. A Young Men's Convention has also been convened during the year, which has given an important impulse to the A. S. movement in the State. To the generous sympathies of the young, the cause of the down-trodden and oppressed slave specially commends itself. And the readiness and zeal with which they are found to embrace it, is one of the most cheering indications of its ultimate triumph.

#### FUNDS.

Upon a final adjustment of the accounts of the last year, it appears that the expenditures of the year exceeded the receipts by the sum of \$353,90. The receipts of the current year, by contributions and donations, are \$1874,75, and the expenditures \$2040,62; leaving a balance against the Society of \$165,87. Adding this to the debt of the last year, and estimating the expense of the Advocate to the Society at \$300, our whole debt is now, in round numbers, about \$820. A full adjustment of the accounts of the Society, now in progress, may show a result somewhat different, though we believe not materially so. It is with extreme regret that the Commit-

tee have to report so large a balance against the Society. Upon data which appeared altogether safe, they estimated at the beginning of the year, the probable receipts of the Society at \$3000, and made their arrangements accordingly. Had it not been for the unexpected and unexampled pecuniary embarrassments of the country for the last six months, this sum would doubtless have been realized, and the treasury of the Society have been found in good condition. As it is, we have suffered in common with all the benevolent associations of the day, and proportionally in no greater degree than they. The Society, we believe, will not for a moment consent to any curtailment of the already inadequate means in the field. We earnestly call upon all therefore, who love the cause of the slave, to aid, by liberal contributions, in carrying on those operations which are essential to a successful issue to the cause in the State.

#### PARENT SOCIETY.

The course of independent action recently adopted by the State Societies, while it has imparted new life to these associations, has nevertheless, as was feared, operated injuriously upon the pecuniary resources, necessary to sustain the operations still left to the Parent Society. The importance of this Society cannot be too highly estimated. A central organization to superintend the whole field, furnish a common bond of union, and to supply that general service which no mere local society can perform, is, in fact, indispensably necessary to the successful prosecution of our great enterprise. The Committee are deeply impressed with the fidelity, singleness of aim, sound judgment, comprehensiveness of views, and ability, with which the Executive Committee of the Parent Society have discharged the duties of their office. In untiring zeal, unflinching integrity, and devotion to the interests committed to their care, they have not, it is believed, been exceeded by the Executive officers of any of our benevolent associations. From the cause above intimated, combined with the general pecuniary distress of the country, the Parent Society has also become embarrassed in its funds, and a special meeting has recently been held to devise means for its present relief. At this meeting the sum of \$10,000 was apportioned upon the different State auxiliaries, with the permission at their option, to draw back one half the amount in the publications of the Society. Of this sum \$500 was assigned to Maine. The Committee believe the assessment equitably made, and would express the earnest hope, notwithstanding the exhausted state of our own finances, that it will be cheerfully and promptly met.

## LEGISLATURE OF MAINE.

At the last session of our State Legislature, numerous petitions were presented, praying the Legislature to request our Senators and Representatives in Congress, to exert their influence for the abolition of Slavery in the District, and to prevent the admission of any new Slave State into the Union.

The subject was referred to a joint select Committee, who made a report adverse to the prayer of the petitioners.

The Committee in their report affirm, that, as no application for the admission of a new Slave State into the Union, was before or likely to come before the existing Congress, the action sought by the petitioners would be premature and improper. Granting the correctness of the fact assumed by the Committee, yet the mere probability of such an application, at any period however remote, would be a sufficient reason, that the attention of Congress should be directed to the subject, and its course in regard to it settled. The most favorable time to discuss such a question and decide it upon its merits, is not, when a territory is ready to be formed into a new State, and, with a slave retinue at its heels, is knocking clamorously at the door of Congress for admission. The history of the admission of Louisiana and the infamous Missouri compromise, show very conclusively, that other reasons than those of justice and humanity and a due regard to the permanent interests of the country, may, in such circumstances, be thrown into the balance and turn the scale.

Mere justice to the citizens of the territories demands, that they should be early apprised of the terms upon which they may expect admission into the Union. Even the slave capitalist himself, regardless of all rights as he is, should not be left in doubt on this subject. Let Congress distinctly declare at the outset, that no State, tolerating slavery, can be admitted into the Union; and the immigration into the territories—the investments of property made in them—the business of the citizens—the customs of society, would all be based upon the expectation that liberty and not slavery would be the foundation principle of their State constitutions. In case of application for admission, the plea of implied assent to the continued existence of slavery could not be set up—partizan interests would not find so plausible pretexts for coming in and deciding the question—and Congress would be free, in the act of admission, forever to secure the States admitted from the defilement and curse of the giant sin.

It is a fact, however, that Florida had just then held a Convention for the purpose of forming a State constitution, preparatory to application for admission into the Union. In the constitution adopted by this Convention, slavery was not merely tolerated, but, by express provision, the Legislature were prohibited from ever passing any laws for its removal. In the debates of this Convention, the right of Florida to become in these circumstances a State, and to demand and receive admission, was not allowed to be questioned. And yet the Committee to whom these facts, if they paid suitable attention to the important subject committed to them, must have been known, inflict severe censure upon the abolitionists for what they are pleased to call their "*ill-timed and impertinent interference.*"

To a favorable answer to the prayer of the petitioners, on both the topics referred to them, the Committee urge a preliminary objection, in their view "*insuperable and conclusive,*" viz. that the petitioners ask the Legislature to speak *in the voice of the State*,—an act which would be proper only, were they a majority, instead of being a minority of the citizens.

It would seem that the concentrated wisdom of the State, in Legislature assembled, might, in a case where the interests of the State and the welfare of the whole country are concerned, advance at least a step beyond the actually expressed opinions of the majority; leaving their justification, if any were necessary, to the effect of time and the natural and irresistible influence of reason and argument. Not to insist upon this, however, the Committee in the conclusion of their report express their confident belief, that a conviction of the great evil of slavery and sympathy for the slave in his privations and sufferings, are not confined to the petitioners, but pervade the whole mass of the citizens. Such being the fact, the Committee need not have feared any very severe rebuke from their constituents, had they reported in favor of the action sought. For the Legislature simply to request our Senators and Representatives in Congress to use their influence for the removal from the District, and to prevent the extension in new States of an universally acknowledged evil, would not surely have been regarded by the people as any very rash or unauthorized step. Nor, had the measure received the active support of the Committee, would it, in any probability, have subjected the State to the loss of their invaluable services for the future.

With the simple enunciation of this "*insuperable and conclusive objection,*" the Committee conceive they might with propriety rest the case. They proceed however, in an argument of some length to

show, that, assuming the popular voice to be in favor of the action desired by the petitioners, still it would not be right to grant their prayer.

The Committee argue that all action for the promotion of their object, through the intervention of the State, is barred the petitioners by a want of power in Congress to grant their request. Congress, say the Committee, possess only the powers granted in the Constitution. The power to abolish slavery in any circumstances is not granted. Therefore Congress does not possess the power.

In the enumeration of powers expressly granted to Congress, will be found the power to provide for the common defence, and the passing of such laws as may be necessary for this object. It will not require a very close examination of the nature and tendencies of slavery to see, that possibly a combination of circumstances may arise, when its abolition may be absolutely necessary for the common defence. When, in virtue of the power to provide for this object, Congress will have the option, either to confer the boon of freedom upon the slaves, or leave the work to be done by a foreign foe; and, as the necessary consequence, the whole southern portion of the country to be laid waste by fire and sword.

On this point, however, it is unnecessary to dwell, as the petitioners do not ask Congress to abolish slavery in the States, but simply in the District and Territories. The whole argument of the Committee in proof that Congress has no power under any circumstances to abolish slavery, is derived from the idea that it has no power to abolish it in the States.

With reference to the States it is admitted, that Congress is limited to the powers expressly or by direct implication granted in the Constitution. The reverse, however, is the case in respect to the District of which it is the local Legislature, and the Territories under its immediate control. In these it has all the powers not expressly or by direct implication prohibited. The Committee have not adduced any evidence that Congress, by the Constitution, is prohibited from abolishing slavery in the District and Territories; nor can any such evidence be found. The minor proposition, therefore, in their elaborate syllogism falls to the ground; and with it, the conclusion to which, in all the triumph of a moral demonstration, they have arrived.

The Committee refer with evident complacency to their argument as entirely "*novel*." This peculiarity of it will not be disputed. It is certainly unlike any thing, which the spirit of slavery has yet put in the mouths of its northern apologists. To Congress has not been

delegated the power to abolish slavery in the country generally, therefore, it has no power to abolish it in the District over which it has absolute jurisdiction, and in the territories under its exclusive control. Such is the precious logic, by which the Committee would satisfy the good people of this State, that they are constitutionally barred from exerting any influence, through their Legislature, for the abolition of a system in the District and Territories, which is undermining the very corner stone of our Republican edifice, putting in peril the liberties of the country, and rendering the name of Republicanism a by-word and an execration. Such is the moral demonstration, by which they would repress the rising sympathy for the slave in the bosoms of their constituents, and arrest all effort, in the exercise of their political power, to remove from the national domain the scandal and plague spot of slavery.

The Committee have recorded their deliberate conviction, that their argument will have but little effect upon "*the abolitionists.*" There is certainly a degree of shrewdness in this—an intuitive sagacity in its relation to the future, closely allied to the spirit of prophecy. Had they added, and upon all others endowed with any tolerable share of intelligence, they would not have been too bold in the assertion. They might have been equally certain, that the fulfilment would have trod very closely upon the heels of the prediction.

The Report of the Committee was adopted by the Legislature and ordered to be printed. A counter Report was submitted on the part of the minority of the Committee, by its chairman, Gen. Appleton, in which the power of Congress in the premises was clearly demonstrated, and the right and duty of the State to exert the influence sought, placed beyond question. The Report was laid upon the table; and we regret to add, an order to print was refused by a vote of 55 to 94. We commend the course of the Legislature to the solemn consideration of the Abolitionists of the State. It furnishes a new proof of the subjection of northern mind to the dark spirit of slavery. It is to the right use of the elective franchise, that we must look for the appropriate remedy.

#### GEORGIA AND MAINE.

In our last Report we gave a somewhat detailed account of the controversy, growing out of a demand upon the Executive of this State by the Governor of Georgia, for the bodies of two of our citizens, charged with the crime of having aided a slave to make his escape from Savannah in that State. By a resolve since passed by



our last Legislature, to whom an appeal had been made by the Executive of Georgia, the course pursued by Governors Dunlap and Kent, in their refusal to make the surrendry demanded, was virtually sustained. Nothing was left therefore for Georgia but to summon immediately her threatened Convention, for the purpose of taking into consideration the state of that Commonwealth and the adoption of such measures as her offended dignity and violated rights might demand. We have looked with no small solicitude for this Convention. It has not however been called; the Legislature, as we have recently been informed by Governor Gilmer, not having made any appropriation to defray the necessary expense. We cannot but express our surprise, that the threatened Convention should have failed from a cause so mercenary in its character, and so little adapted it would seem, to influence the lofty chivalry of that powerful and patriotic State. That Georgia intended merely to frighten us by an empty menace, in the determination so solemnly announced to hold a Convention, we will not for a moment suppose. Indeed, from the proceedings of the recent Legislature of that State, it appears that if we are not annihilated by that same Convention, it is not because the indignation of Georgia has in the least abated or her wrath waxed cold. In his message at the opening of the Legislature, Gov. Gilmer, after some caustic remarks upon the course of the Executive and Legislature of Maine, declares his decided conviction, that the Legislature of Georgia would be justified in declaring by law all citizens of Maine, who may come within the jurisdiction of the State on board of any vessel, as owners, officers, or mariners, as doing so with the intent to commit the crime of seducing negro slaves from their owners, and requiring them to be dealt with accordingly by the officers of justice.

The subject was referred to a Committee of the Legislature, and, with a patience truly exemplary in the circumstances of the case, permitted to sleep in their hands, till nearly the close of the session. When, the chairman of the Committee, having for some reason which does not appear failed to do it, it was introduced to the attention of the Legislature by one of the members of the Committee, in a bill declaring all citizens of Maine, that should enter the territory of Georgia, *as public enemies of the State*—their persons liable to be seized as such, and their property *confiscated*. This bill certainly does not lack spirit, whatever else it may lack. It may be considered as a true exponent of the kind and degree of civilization, which the institution of slavery is naturally adapted to produce. Instead of it was substituted another, imposing a quarantine of one

hundred days upon all vessels, entering the ports of Georgia from Maine, and prohibiting the officers, seamen, &c. from leaving them during the period of quarantine, under penalty of imprisonment in the public penitentiaries, for a term of not less than five or more than ten years. The idea of this bill is, we perceive, regarded as truly felicitous at the South. It considers the State of Maine, in which the humblest citizen is duly protected from the insolent demands of the slave-holding power, as an infected district, and our citizens as all impregnated with a certain contagion of liberty, which at least an hundred days airing in a slave-holding atmosphere, is requisite so far to remove, as that they may with safety be permitted to hold intercourse with the land of whips and of chains.

The bill, though a direct nullification of that clause in the Constitution of the United States, which gives to the citizens of each State the rights and immunities of citizens in the several States, and of that which confers upon Congress the right to regulate commerce between the States,—and though, in fact, a preliminary step to a declaration of war upon Maine, was passed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 143 to 43. It was lost in the Senate, either for want of time for its mature consideration, or from an intuitive perception that discretion is the better part of valor. In its stead was substituted, and finally adopted by both branches of the Legislature, a series of Resolutions, calling upon Congress so to amend the statutes relative to the delivery of fugitives, as to take the power out of the hands of the Executives of the States, and put it into the hands of the judges of the Circuit Court; leaving to them no discretion to refuse a surrendry, when the demand is made in due form of law. The course proposed is certainly remarkable, in view of the political opinions hitherto maintained in that State. And it furnishes additional evidence, that slavery is the pole-star of southern politics. No State has been more boisterous in the assertion of State rights than Georgia. In practical nullification of the laws of the Union, when they have come in competition with her interests, she has far outstripped the State of the great nullifier himself. As, for instance, in parcelling out among her citizens the lands of the defenceless Cherokees, in direct violation of the most solemn treaties, the supreme law of the land. And yet we now find this State, for the protection of her domestic institution, humbly praying Congress to enact statutes, which would virtually deprive the States of one of the highest attributes of sovereignty—the power to protect their own citizens !

In the appeal to Congress, Georgia will not stand alone. The

State of S. Carolina has already promised to make common cause with her, and Virginia is already by her side. A controversy altogether similar to that between Maine and Georgia, has just occurred between Virginia and New York. Two citizens of the latter State, charged with the crime of aiding a slave to escape from the former, have also been demanded as fugitives from justice. The Governor of New York has refused to deliver them up, on the ground that to help the captive recover his liberty is not a crime by the laws of that State; and especially upon the true and only impregnable ground, that it is not a crime by the common law or the law of nations or by the general assent of mankind, and therefore, that it is not a crime within the meaning of that clause of the Constitution which requires the surrender of fugitives. The Governor of Virginia, in common with his Excellency of Georgia, maintains that such a construction of the Constitution is a violation of its true import, incompatible with the rights and destructive of the safety of the slave-holding States. That none of the doctrines of the disorganizing abolitionists, is so well calculated to endanger the security of their peculiar property, or to jeopardize the tranquillity and hazard the dissolution of the Union. And he declares it to be the duty of Congress to remove any ambiguity, if any exists, in the laws made to carry this provision into effect, and to entrust the execution of them to persons whose views of duty shall be consistent with southern rights. In other words, to take the execution of these laws out of the hands of the State functionaries, and put it into the hands of those of the General Government, appointed under the immediate supervision of the slave power and ready to obey its behests.

The proposed measure, it will be perceived, is an open acknowledgement of the fact, that without the power to act directly upon the free citizens of the north, slavery cannot be maintained at the south. It is a direct, undisguised effort to wield the whole power of the Federal Government in support of the domestic institution, in total contempt of the rights of the free States and in utter disregard of all those barriers against arbitrary arrests, and false imprisonment, and transportation to distant climes to be tried for alleged offences, that the toil and blood of ages have erected. We shall wait with no small solicitude the action of Congress, should the measure proposed be urged upon it. One thing however is certain, the free States can never assent to it, until they have become utterly regardless of the dearest rights and the liberties of their citizens, and are prepared to be slaves themselves. Let the principle be established, that each State may determine, as it pleases, what shall be deemed felony in

all the States, and that it may employ the functionaries of the General Government, without any discretion in the premises, to arrest and deliver over for trial by its Courts individuals charged with infractions of its laws and claimed as fugitives from its justice—and, instead of the free institutions our fathers labored to establish, have we fallen upon a despotism which we might gladly exchange for that of the Russian or the Turk, and from the intolerable burdens of which, another American Revolution is alone adequate to relieve us.

In one respect these recent efforts of the slave power is a ground of congratulation. It furnishes decisive proof of an effective Anti-slavery spirit in the country. In proportion as the sentiment really pervades the mass of the people of the free States, that the slave is a man—that he has rights cruelly wrested from him by the hand of oppression—that it is no crime, whatever the color of his skin, to aid the oppressed to escape,—in proportion as a real sympathy is more extensively felt for the bondman in his privations and sufferings, in that proportion will the tenure of slave property be rendered insecure. In the social and commercial intercourse between the free and slave States, especially in those contiguous to each other, facilities for the escape of the slave will be continually multiplied. The south is beginning to feel this by a somewhat expensive experience. Notwithstanding the severe laws extorted by Kentucky from the servile Legislature of Ohio, more than 800 Kentucky chattels, it is said, have during the last year passed through Ohio, cheered and helped on their way to be transformed into men in the dominions of Queen Victoria. The Centreville Times, a Maryland paper, informs us, that “such is the number and success of elopements from that State, that no property in the State is so *insecure* as that held in slaves.” And the same is doubtless, to a greater or less extent, the case in all the frontier slave-holding States. The South is not slow to perceive the inevitable tendency, the final result of these encroachments of liberty. Hence the late desperate efforts by menace and bluster and threats to dissolve the Union, and appeals to the General Government, to obtain new guaranties, new securities for the quiet enjoyment of her domestic institution. Such efforts are vain. They serve only to indicate more clearly the inveterate malignity of the slave power, and to show the utter folly of attempting to blend much longer in harmonious union, elements so discordant as liberty and slavery.

The South has nothing to hope from the legislation of the free States in her favor, how much soever they may be disposed to protect her peculiar institution. All human legislation is powerless,

when it comes in opposition to the dictates of conscience, and the deep sympathies of the soul strongly moved in view of the infliction of wrong. When it pronounces that to be a crime, which reason and conscience and the very soul of man feels to be no crime. In such cases enactments devised with all the wisdom of Solon, and sanctioned by penalties severe as the code of Draco, will remain a dead letter upon the statute book. Not a slave less has escaped through Ohio, in consequence of the black law which slavery has there enacted, prohibiting to him under severe penalties all aid or comfort on the way. The South we repeat has nothing to hope from the legislation of the free States for the protection of her human chattels. And when she carries her proposed appeal to Congress for aid and there urges her demands, then will it be distinctly seen, that the only alternative for this nation is the emancipation of the slaves of the South or the enslavement of the freemen of the North. Then will commence in earnest the contest with liberty and slavery—a contest which no power on earth can arrest until liberty triumphs and slavery is no more.

In his last annual Message the Executive of this State has referred in a dignified manner to the insolent measures proposed in reference to our citizens in the Legislature of Georgia. Had those measures been adopted, there would we think have been no retaliation in kind by the authorities of this State. Be this as it may, we feel safe in assuring our Georgia neighbors, whatever their complexion, that they will be treated with all due respect in Maine; whether they travel by aid only of those powers of locomotion which nature has provided, or by the more expeditious modes of modern invention; whether they come to us in the cabins of our coasters, or stored away among bales of cotton in the forehold; whether they have pursued their course hither openly and by light of day, or have come stealthily among us, under the sole light and guidance of the North Star.

#### ECCELESIASTICAL ACTION.

The Committee rejoice in the evidence furnished, that the cause of the slave has made good progress, during the year past in the State, among professing Christians. The different ecclesiastical bodies, who have hitherto borne their testimony against slavery, have reiterated that testimony; while others who had before maintained silence, have raised their voice in behalf of the oppressed. In connection with the annual meeting of the General Baptist Association, a Convention, consisting of most if not all the ministers

and members present, was held on the subject of slavery. An able address was adopted by this Convention, setting forth the claims of the slave to the sympathy and efforts of Christians, and exhorting the members of their denomination to think upon and discuss the subject of slavery, and especially to carry out the principles of abolitionism in bold, vigorous, decided, and immediate action.

At the Annual Conference of the Methodist Denomination, the pacification measure, by which the action of our brethren of that denomination had during the previous year been materially restrained, was abandoned. And in the choice of members to the ensuing General Conference, an entire abolition delegation was elected, both principals and substitutes. The fact furnishes the most cheering evidence of the rapid progress of the cause, in that large and influential denomination. Its importance will be duly estimated when it is recollected, that on the floor of that General Conference will unquestionably be decided, one of the severest conflicts between a slave-holding and a pure Christianity. That upon the right action of that body is now depending the emancipation of hundreds of thousands of slaves, and the putting forth a power sufficient alone to ring the death knell of slavery. May God in his mercy grant the noble men engaged in the mighty achievement of purifying this body from its guilty relation to slavery, that wisdom which is profitable to direct, and that success which is sure to crown every well directed effort in the cause of truth and of righteousness.

In the Congregational churches there is a large and increasing number, who are practically and efficiently obeying the divine injunction to remember those who are in bonds, as bound with them. Several of the County Conferences, as heretofore, have suitably borne their testimony against the giant sin of our land. Others have still maintained silence on the subject, or, by dexterous management, have contrived to prevent all expression of sentiment in behalf of their outraged, suffering brethren in bondage. It was hoped that the last General Conference of this denomination, would have at least reiterated its expression of sentiment on the subject of slavery, passed some years since. In this however our expectations have been disappointed. A series of resolutions on the subject, of the most unexceptionable character, were indefinitely postponed without even being read—the abolitionists quietly permitting the majority to take its own course, without opposition or debate. The ground of this summary rejection of the resolutions, so far as it could be learned, appears to have been great fear on the part of the majority, that the Conference had not yet become sufficiently disciplined in

the school of its great Head to rule its own spirit. It was feared that the introduction of the resolutions would create an explosion unbecoming the disciples of Christ, whereby the peace and harmony of the body would be greatly disturbed. Perhaps the idea that the passage of the resolutions might appear to favor the abolitionists, was not without its influence.

While we believe the course of the Conference on this occasion will not hereafter be viewed by itself with complacency, we rejoice to record a movement on its part, from which we anticipate the most happy results. At its meeting the year previous, a Committee was appointed by the Conference for the purpose of corresponding with other ecclesiastical bodies and individuals at the South. The Committee addressed a letter to different ecclesiastical bodies, proposing several searching questions in regard to the holding of slaves by church members, the ground on which slave holding by such is defended, and the actual working of the system, so far as the practice of the churches in relation to it is concerned. Some of the bodies addressed did not condescend to acknowledge the receipt of the letter; while others, deeming silence perhaps the safest course, returned it in a blank envelope with a simple note of rejection. A different action however, was taken by the Presbytery of Tombeche, Mississippi. This Presbytery returned a reply to the communication, in which the ground is openly maintained and defended from the Scriptures, that slavery is not a MORAL EVIL. And in which also, slavery is placed in the same rank with the domestic relations, and is defended on the ground of its beneficial results to the slave. The Presbytery request the Conference of Maine to publish their reply, as an exposition of their candid and honest views on the subject, and in conclusion declare, that should their reply be the means of giving information and setting the consciences of the brethren in Maine at rest, it will be the subject of devout gratitude to Him, who has commanded his children to love each other as brethren.

The Conference voted to comply with the request, directing the Committee at the same time to prepare and publish an answer. The Committee have ably performed this duty in a document of great length, in which the Scriptures are most successfully defended from the charge of countenancing American slavery, and in which the arguments of the Tombeche Presbytery in defence of the patriarchal system are scattered to the winds. This document has, through the columns of the Christian Mirror and the Wesleyan Journal, into which it was copied, been extensively circulated in

*The article alluded to, was*

this State, and somewhat also at the South. It is one of the most able productions yet elicited in the Anti-Slavery discussion, and deserves to be put in a permanent form, and placed for general circulation among the most efficient of our publications. As the Presbytery of Tombecke professes to be bound by the deductions of Scripture on the question of slavery, we wait with no small anxiety the effect of this scorching argument upon their consciences.

The document goes out by authority of the Conference, and must be regarded as an exposition of its sentiments upon the topics discussed. We are not, and never have been, tenacious of the mode in which our religious bodies discharge their duty to the slaveholding churches, provided it is only done. We are solicitous for a clear expression, by way of resolutions deliberately and solemnly adopted, of their conviction of the sinfulness of slaveholding and the duty of immediate emancipation, in order that silence may not be construed into indifference; in order that the pleas for the slaveholder put forth by individuals and particular official organs may not be regarded as the sentiments of the whole Northern Church; in order that opposition to abolitionists and their efforts may not, if it ought not, be regarded as opposition to the great doctrines they inculcate; in order that the slaveholder may not lay the flattering unction to his soul, that the good men of the North regard him as an unfortunate man, having an evil entailed upon him which he cannot though he would gladly get rid of, rather than as a high-handed sinner against God and his fellow man; and especially, in order that the church, having explicitly acknowledged and proclaimed the sinfulness of slaveholding, may take such other steps of remonstrance and discipline, so far as disciplinary measures are in its power, as the circumstances of the case, and the laws of the Christian household in regard to offending brethren demand.

The Freewill Baptist denomination exhibits the cheering, though we regret to say singular spectacle, of a denomination united almost to a man on the subject of slavery. The denomination is prosperous in all its relations and at peace within itself. Thus furnishing an irrefragable proof, that abolitionism of the most decisive character, so far from being the antagonist, is the result of religion. Thus showing that it is not from a free discussion of the subject of slavery by the churches, the pulpit, the solemn convocation—or from the decided action of the churches against this mystery of iniquity, that the peace of the church is liable to be disturbed, its prosperity marred, and the body rent. These evils naturally proceed not from discussion and appropriate action, but from that indifference which will

*written <sup>3</sup> by the Rev Silas McKim.*



not listen to the cry of the perishing, that spirit of intolerance which will not bear the free expression of opinion, the fear of agitation more than the fear of sin, and an unhallowed expediency, which, reversing the order of nature and of truth, would be peaceable first and pure next.

At the last General Conference of this body for the United States, held at Conneaut, Ohio, the subject of slavery as heretofore, received its due share of attention. In a series of resolutions the Conference declared in the most emphatic terms, its abhorrence of slavery as the crying sin of our land—expressed its regret at the toleration of this sin in the churches—and its conviction that the disposition to keep the subject out of the church is a device of Satan to shield it from the power of truth. The Conference exhorted the members of their denomination to bear, both in public and private, their testimony against the sin, and to use faithfully the moral and religious influence in their power for its removal; and commended the anti-slavery cause to the effective support of their ministers and churches. The Conference also expressed by resolution its approbation of the straight-forward and decided course on the subject of their official organ the *Morning Star*. They resolved also, that the individual who would not impartially examine the question of slavery, or who after examination should advocate its continuance, is not worthy to be esteemed a disciple of Christ, but after due and unsuccessful admonition ought not to be fellowshiped as a Christian.

The sincerity and steadfastness of the Conference in regard to this last resolution, was immediately put to the test. A slaveholding clergyman from Kentucky, professing to have recently adopted the peculiar religious views of the denomination, and coming with letters of recommendation from the one with which he had been in connection, presented himself for examination for the purpose of being admitted to their body. The Conference, on examination, finding that he claimed property in human beings, declared that it could neither ordain him as a minister nor fellowship him as a Christian.

Portions of other religious denominations are rapidly advancing, we are happy to perceive, to the same position. The Presbytery of Cincinnati, for example, at its meeting within the year, has resolved that ministers coming from Presbyteries known to tolerate slavery, cannot be received into the Presbytery, without furnishing satisfactory evidence that they do not hold slaves, or having sold slaves, that they have repented of the sin. They also resolved that the churches within their limits, ought to take such measures as shall

effectually exclude from their fellowship all that are known to participate in the crime of slaveholding.

If slaveholding be a sin, then should the sinner in this thing be treated as other offenders. He should be admonished, rebuked—and in case of remaining incorrigible, be removed from the fellowship of the churches. To this must the northern churches come, if they would clear themselves from the guilt of participation in the sin, or even retain the respect of the slaveholding church itself.

Says the Southern Christian Herald, a religious paper published in Charleston, S. C.

“There is scarcely any diversity of sentiment at the North upon this subject. The great mass of the people believing slavery to be sinful, are clearly of the opinion that as a system, it should be abolished throughout this land and throughout the world. They differ as to the time and mode of abolition. *The abolitionists consistently argue, that whatever is sinful, should be instantly abandoned. The others, by a strange sort of reasoning for Christian men, contend, though slavery is sinful, yet it may be allowed to exist until it is expedient to abolish it ; or if, in many cases, this reasoning might be translated into plain English, the sense would be, both in church and state, slavery though sinful may be allowed to exist until our interest will suffer us to say that it must be abolished.—This is not slander ; it is simply a plain way of stating a plain truth. It does seem the evident duty of every man to become an abolitionist, who believes slavery to be sinful, for the Bible allows no tampering with sin.*”

Such is the legitimate conclusion of the professedly christian slaveholder and defender of slavery. We commend it to the careful consideration of northern ministers and Christians. We gain nothing by a timid, apologetic method of treating this subject. The Bible allows no tampering with sin. If slaveholding be a sin, let it be fearlessly proclaimed as such ; let the duty of immediate repentance be urged upon the sinner, and in case that he continues incorrigible, let him be treated as other incorrigible offenders.

Slaveholding ministers and members of the churches are continually coming to the North, and instead of being met with plain and affectionate rebuke, are admitted without question to our pulpits and communion tables. They may hear much of the wild and reckless spirit of the abolitionists, but little of the sin of slavery—that is a delicate subject, not so much as to be named among brethren. And they return to rob the laborer of his wages and to oppress the poor, soothed in their iniquity, rather than pointedly rebuked and condemned. In conducting the benevolent operations of the day the northern churches unite with the slaveholder and receive his contributions into the treasury of the Lord. It is the duty of the northern church, a duty which it may not longer defer, to decide the question—is slavery right or is it wrong. And if it be wrong, to have no communion with it direct or indirect. After suitable pre-

liminary steps, let the slaveholder be excluded from the fellowship of the churches. When, on the day set apart for prayer for the conversion of the world, he comes with his offering extorted from the tears and blood of the slave; when from the accursed fields, where the bleeding bondman toils in hopeless servitude, and woman writhes beneath the lash, and helpless infancy groans beneath the unnatural task, to fill his coffers with unhallowed gold; when from the land of broken hearts, and degradation deep, and pollution dark, and woes unutterable created or continued by his hand, he comes with the many thousands of Israel to present his offering for the conversion of the world—let the church take up the admonition of her Lord, and proclaim it aloud in the ear of the oppressor—“If thou bringest thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift.” Go first and be reconciled to thy brother, the victim of thy oppression at home—thy brother, bone of thy bone and flesh of thy flesh, whose toil thou art exacting without recompence, whose mind thou art shrouding in darkness, whose immortal spirit thou hast well nigh quenched within him, and the blood of whose soul is even now in the skirt of thy garment—go first and be reconciled to him and then come and offer thy gift.

We take this position in no spirit of unkindness to southern christians. We are aware that evils have in past ages been nurtured in the very bosom of the church, bringing forth in other respects the unquestionable fruits of the Spirit, the existence of which in such a connection is now the subject of unmingled astonishment. We know that there are times of ignorance at which God is said to have winked. But these times in respect to the sin of slavery are now rapidly passing, if they have not already passed. After all the investigations of modern times in respect to human rights, and the triumphant establishment of the great principle of republicanism, that every human being as such, has an equal right to liberty and life and the pursuit of happiness, have we yet to prove to any who do not wilfully turn their eyes from the light, that a system which lays its victims prostrate at the feet of despotic power, is wrong? In the meridian splendor of this Gospel day, have we yet to convince the disciple of Christ that to trample in the dust a being created in the image of God, rob him of the entire avails of his labor, darken his intellect, dwarf his soul, and traffic in his bones and sinews and blood is a moral evil? In this day of earnest effort for the universal diffusion of God's word, when with an energy inspired by the urgent

command of the great Head of the Church, we have made haste to put the Bible in the hut of the degraded Hottentot, the debased Sandwich Islander, the untutored Savage upon our borders, and have scattered its life giving leaves in the regions of eternal snows, have thrown it over the wall of China, and put it in the very Mosque of the Turk, shall the Bible distributor be expelled from the door of the slave, forbidden to enter there, and the Christian tell us that in the system that does this there is no moral evil? At a time, when from a thorough conviction that knowledge is the only basis of a sound and vigorous piety, we are establishing schools and seminaries of learning, setting up printing presses at an immense expense, sending out teachers for the instruction of the ignorant in all lands, shall the slave be deprived of all these means and appliances for his intellectual and moral elevation, and his pious master consent to the deed, and see in the system that requires it no moral evil? In this day of Christian enterprise, when there is no region too remote to be explored, no tribe of men too degraded to be sought out by christian charity, when the church with a zeal unparalleled is engaged in the work of a world's conversion, can the three millions of slaves at our very door be excluded from her sympathies and efforts, and no sin be committed? When God put it into the heart of one man to invent the alphabet, and another the art of printing, and another the power press, and another the steam-boat and rail-road for the rapid and universal diffusion of the knowledge and blessings of salvation, and when he has stirred up a sympathy and spirit of effort for the benighted, the degraded, the oppressed, such as never before has been witnessed, does the christian slaveholder believe, that there are three millions of men in our land, to whom in this mighty movement of God's heart to enlighten and purify and bless the world, the divine compassion does not extend? destined by the hand that formed them to be mere hewers of wood and drawers of water—given over by their Creator to perpetual darkness and degradation, to eternal ignominy and chains—their tears forever unnoticed, their groanings unheard? The advocates of such a system, the receivers of such a faith are born too late in the day. It is not light they want, but the fear of God and compassion for his poor. Let them repent or lay aside the christian name. Let them bring forth fruits meet for repentance in breaking every yoke, or, renouncing their claim to civilization, the reproach of Christianity and scorn of the world, let them take up their abode in the desert.

It was supposed before the anti-slavery movement, that professing christians generally at the South were sighing over the abomi-

nations of slavery and earnestly praying for relief. The movement has drawn aside the veil, and has presented a state of things as surprising as it is appalling. The developements it has produced, has shown beyond all previous conception the torpedo power of the system upon christian conscience,—its terrific energy to corrupt and defile the very church of God.

Several ecclesiastical bodies beside the Presbytery of Tomtecebe, have openly declared slavery not to be a MORAL EVIL. And the leading influences of the southern church have spoken out on the side of slavery, and have appealed to the Bible in its defence. And what are the Northern churches doing to vindicate the christian name from the foul dishonor thus cast upon it?

That charity which hopeth all things, would lead us to believe that there are many among the professed disciples of Christ at the South, who have not yet bowed the knee to Baal—many whose consciences are not yet seared as with a hot iron—many whom the light of truth may yet arouse—whom the voice of christian remonstrance may yet reach. With all the earnestness of a deep conviction of its importance we call, therefore, upon the churches of the North to cause it to be distinctly and unequivocally known where they stand on this great question; to lift up their voice as a trumpet, to cry aloud and spare not. By all the methods of remonstrance, entreaty, and rebuke, public and private, in their power, to show the people their transgression and especially the horse of Jacob its sin. And if the southern churches will not hear, then to come out and be separate, and have no more fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.

#### POLITICAL ACTION.

During the year previous to our last annual meeting, the question of political action received a very marked degree of attention. The interest in this deeply important branch of abolition duty, has since continued to increase, and is now more than any other the subject of earnest discussion.

Dissatisfied with the results of the course hitherto pursued, many of the early and most efficient friends of the cause are now advocating the formation of a third party, based upon the great principles of human rights, for which as abolitionists we are contending. Instead of depending as heretofore upon the existing political parties to present suitable candidates for their suffrages, the exigency of the cause, it is believed, demands that abolitionists should take this

work into their own hands, and put in nomination their own candidates for office.

It must be admitted, that the course hitherto pursued of depending upon party nominations to secure the election of abolitionists, however excellent in theory, has signally failed of its object. Thus far abolitionists themselves have very generally dishonored the cause, by giving their votes for party candidates to the utter abandonment of their anti-slavery principles. Our hearts have bled at the shameful dereliction of duty in this respect on the part of many professed friends of the slave, during the elections the past year in this State. In view of the actual results at the polls, we cannot but regard the questioning of party candidates, with a view to guide the friends of the cause in the bestowment of their suffrages, as a mere farce, from which the least degree of self respect should lead us in future to abstain. The ridicule of the mountain laboring and bringing forth a mouse we can bear patiently, but the reproach of the enemy at the palpable inconsistency of abolitionists at the polls, after all the note of preparation in the interrogating and publishing far and wide the answers of party candidates, is a sword in our bones that we cannot endure. We do not perceive that abolitionists elsewhere have been more faithful to their high trust, than the abolitionists of Maine. In the fourth District in Massachusetts, in which the pending election for Representative to Congress excited so much interest at our last meeting, in consequence of the falling off of scattering or abolition votes, one of the obnoxious candidates was elected. In Rhode Island, a distinguished abolitionist, and member of the Executive Committee of the State A. S. Society, was in nomination for Representative to Congress, but received no support from the friends of the slave of the opposite political party. And in numerous instances where candidates have answered satisfactorily the questions propounded them, they have been most shamefully deserted by abolitionists on the day of election.

In all cases, where candidates have thus far been returned to the State or National Legislature, by the aid in part of abolition votes, the interests of their respective parties have still been paramount; and whenever these have come in collision with the interests of the slave, the latter have been made to give way. In the recent election of U. S. Senator in New York, abolitionists in both branches of the Legislature, with a single exception, voted with their respective political parties. And as the consequence, a supporter of the gag resolutions of the U. S. Senate and the infamous bill of Mr. Calhoun to establish through the post office a censorship of the

press, was re-elected as one of the Representatives of the Empire State, for the ensuing six years. Whereas, had abolitionists united upon their own candidate, and have adhered to their principles, a very different result would doubtless have ensued. In the late election of Speaker to the U. S. House of Representatives, individuals, as the respected Slade of Vermont, who had received the confidence and support of abolitionists, aided by their votes, for the accomplishment of party purposes, to place in the chair not merely an opponent of abolition, but a slaveholder and voter for the Atherton Gag.

Though the question may perhaps not yet be considered as definitely settled, we see no hope that the present mode of discharging at the polls our imperative duty as abolitionists, will work out for the future any better results. It is in fact with extreme difficulty that men break away from early associations, and especially that they come out in opposition to the political party with which they have long been united, and the success of which has long been the object of fervent desire and of active effort. It requires no small degree of moral courage and devotion to the cause of the slave to break away from the constraining force of habit, and, in the face of day, and to the jeopardy of party interests, vote with the opposite political party, even when fully convinced that of the individuals proposed for our suffrages, the candidate of our own political party is the opponent, and that of the other the friend of the anti-slavery cause. Under such circumstances the influence of party feeling presents a powerful obstacle to that right conviction of the understanding, which is absolutely requisite to right action. From known laws of the mind, it will be easy upon very weak and inadequate evidence to believe that the candidate, whose success from party considerations is desired, is sound upon the abolition question; while the declarations of the opposite candidate, will, from the fact that he is of the opposite party, be received with distrust, or be utterly disbelieved. And thus numbers, in the main friends of the slave and desirous to promote his cause, will be found arrayed against him at the polls, attached to the car of party, wearing its livery and bowing down under its yoke. Thousands of votes, might, it is believed be given to the slave by the aid of distinct nominations, which for these reasons have thus far been lost to his cause.

Under the existing mode of operation the whole moral effect of the abolition vote, as a demonstration of the abolitionism of the community, has been nullified by the fact, as in the case of Lt. Governor Bradish of N. York, that candidates for office have, in consequence of a frank disclosure of abolition sentiments, lost in their

own party, votes equal to or even exceeding those gained from the abolition ranks. When neither candidate answers satisfactorily, this result has and may still be expected to follow in a more striking manner. Under such circumstances men naturally prefer staying away from the polls and not voting at all, to enduring the trouble and expense of attendance, merely to scatter, or in other words, throw away their votes. To secure the attendance of the individual, and his active exertions to secure that of others, there is wanting the necessary, the indispensable stimulus of the warm desire to give to the real candidate of our choice the highest possible degree of support. There is a life in such a movement, an energy communicated by it, which the cold throwing of a vote for some Mr. Scattering can never impart.

It is a radical vice of the existing mode of operation, that it fails, and must necessarily from the very constitution of the mind, fail to secure between abolitionists of the opposite political parties that confidence in each other, which is absolutely essential to success. On either side there will always be persons whose firmness will be suspected. On either side, especially when a few votes may decide the election, there will be the fear lest by defection in the other, party objects will be lost, while the cause of the slave will not be promoted,—and thus the friends of the slave in both will fail to adhere to their abolition professions from mutual distrust. The actual cutting adrift from party by an independent nomination, the common assembling together, the interchange of thought and feeling, the interest excited to promote the success of a candidate nominated by themselves, and the party bonds growing out of such a movement, furnish one of the most effectual guaranties for united and persevering effort in the promotion of the common object.

The reformation of the political parties of the day, so that either or both shall adopt any of the fundamental principles or measures of abolition, is altogether beyond reasonable expectation. Let either avow sympathy with the abolitionists, let either attempt the promotion of any one of our objects, and it would, so far as the purposes of its present organization are concerned, be at once annihilated. It would be immediately deserted by the southern half of its members and by no inconsiderable portion of the northern. This self immolation cannot be expected from either, until all other interests are merged in the one great question of liberty or slavery. From the ascendancy of either party we have as abolitionists little or nothing to hope. At the head of the one stands an individual pledged to interpose his veto, in the case of the abolition of slavery by Con-



gress in the District without the assent of his southern adherents, and who owes his elevation to the high office which he holds, in no small degree, to the fact that he is as available for the purposes of the slavocracy as any southern man. , And at the head of the other an individual whose position as defined by himself, is that of uncompromising hostility to the abolition movement. For the success of either, the vote of the south is necessary, and to Moloch therefore must they bow. It is the policy of both to secure the south at all events, and therefore to disavow all connection with the abolitionists, all desire to promote their peculiar opinions and measures; to denounce them in public, and in private to grant them just so much as may make them available for party ends, and no more. Individuals placed in office by the influence of abolition votes are still in the present system under bonds to their party. Abolitionism with them is a secondary concern. Upon incidental questions, as the right of petition, they may be expected to be faithful to the trust reposed in them. But on a test question, where the liberty of the slave and the despotism that binds him grapple for the mastery, Whig and Democrat will alike go for party first and the slave next. Here is the strong, if not conclusive argument for distinct nominations. It is so plain, that even a child may understand it,—if we would have men to do our work for us in Congress, we must send our men there to do it. Men untrammelled by pledges to other interests, and whose primary object shall be the emancipation of the slave. One such individual upon the floor of Congress, would effect more for the cause, than scores of the one-fifth or one-fiftieth abolitionists, that deference to abolitionism has thus far placed there. The influence of one such individual would be mighty for the attainment of our object. In a direct effort for its promotion, he might indeed be gagged; but in the ordinary course of business, in the subjects continually coming up for discussion, with a mind intent upon the one great purpose, he could not fail of opportunities to strike at the very heart of slavery. His very presence would be an ill omen to the continuance of the system, which could not fail perpetually to harass and disturb its guilty defenders. He would be to them the living witness, the visible representative of a power beyond their control—a power requiring only to be put in action to sweep the accursed thing from the District, to annihilate it in the land.

In a direct vote for the chief magistrate of the nation, the influence of an abolition party, might from the fewness of its numbers be small. There are particular Districts, however, where even now it would be powerfully felt. There is in the community a large body

of voters, who, disgusted with party movements and party intrigues, stand aloof from the polls and who are not yet identified with abolitionists, but who, on a great moral question—as that of slavery, with suitable candidates placed before them, might easily be rallied. With the enterprise and energy engendered by a distinct nomination, abolitionism could not fail soon to be respectably represented in our State Legislatures, and a body of men would soon be thrown into Congress, that would make the Hall of Liberty, where her voice has so long been hushed, ring again with the sentiments of the declaration of independence—men whose powers of speech would not be paralyzed, whose tongues would not cleave to the roof of their mouths, for fear lest the Whig or Democratic party should suffer by their advocacy of the cause of the slave—men who would be heard in spite of the efforts of the minions of slavery there, whose office work it is to move the previous question, hiss down the advocate of Freedom, browbeat the more intrepid of party representatives whose chains do not sit easily upon them, and by menace and bluster and threats of dissolution of the Union to alarm the timid and silence discussion. Men who would plead the cause of the oppressed in terms befitting its magnitude, and move debate which would be a consuming fire to American despotism.

In no political arrangement which the nation has yet witnessed, could men engage under more solemn conviction of duty, with higher objects to attain, with more confident hope of success. Cheered on by an approving conscience, by the approbation of the civilized world, with truth on its side, and the smile of Heaven upon it, such a party could not fail in the end to accomplish its object. Victory it would seem must perch upon its banner, as soon as it should be flung to the breeze.

To such a movement objections have been made which are deserving serious and candid examination. It is thought that the course proposed would detract from the effect of the anti-slavery effort as a moral and religious enterprise. The A. S. Society enjoins upon its members the exercise of the elective franchise for the benefit of the slave, as a part of that testimony which they are bound to bear against slavery. A neglect or abandonment of the cause of the slave at the polls, serves absolutely to nullify and to destroy all else that may be said or done in his behalf. If it be therefore a moral and religious duty to act politically at all, it must be to pursue such a course as shall make our political action most effective, whatever that course may be.

In the management of existing political parties, there is, as is

universally admitted, an enormous waste of moral principle, and it is thought that an abolition party will not be exempt from a full share of exposure to this evil. It is feared also, that into the ranks of such a party would soon rush the disappointed politician, the ambitious aspirant after office, a host of men bent wholly upon self-aggrandizement and regarding in reality the cause of the slave as only a stepping stone for the attainment of selfish ends. There is danger, it is admitted, from this quarter. It is a danger however which must be encountered in whatever way we discharge our political duties. Upon the present system as well as upon the one proposed, ambitious men may embrace abolition sentiments for the sake of notoriety, or from the secret hope of pushing themselves forward to political preferment by the aid of abolition votes. And in the strife of the parties of the day to secure for their own ends, or to neutralize the abolition influence, abundant opportunities will occur for bribery and corruption to do its work. Trial and temptation must be encountered, in whatever way any duty is attempted to be performed. The nature of the cause for which such a party would be organized, furnishes a safe-guard of no small power against the danger feared. The object would be to confer the blessings of freedom upon three millions of despised and oppressed men. It is to the warm sympathies of the heart that the appeal is made. And a party for such an object would naturally attract to itself only such as are susceptible of a generous sympathy with the slave, and who are disposed to make personal sacrifices for his benefit. Beside, it is a well known fact, that the mind naturally becomes assimilated to the objects which it habitually contemplates. Great principles kept constantly in view and vigorously applied in appropriate action, tend powerfully to elevate and ennoble the whole character. Our present political parties have swiftly descended the downward road, for the want of great ends to be accomplished by their organization. The questions on which they divide, though not unimportant, are questions of mere expediency, rather than great and eternal truths. And hence the bustle and activity of the political conflict is for objects essentially belittling in their very nature. The strife is for the ins to keep their places and the outs to get in, for the loaves and fishes of office and the spoils of victory. As abolitionists we are contending for those great principles of civil and religious liberty, those high principles of eternal rectitude, the contemplation of which has enlarged the intellect and elevated the character in all ages of the world; and which in their application to the immediate objects of our effort, serve to elicit and develope the most worthy suscepti-

bilities of the soul. Our object is to remove the dust from the stones, to clear away the rubbish and to carry on to its completion that splendid fabric of civil polity, the broad foundation of which our fathers laid in tears and in blood; but which by a withering compromise they left unfinished. There is therefore in the Anti-Slavery enterprise, the same spirit-stirring motive, the same high and animating influences, the same profound devotion to human rights, that bore them unscathed through all the trials and temptations of their great conflict. Our spirits commune with theirs; we are warned by their single error; we are encouraged by their example; we see them by our side; we hear their animating voices and catch the mighty inspiration they felt, as for God and liberty they struck. Oh, could the high and holy principles of our movement but pervade the political parties of our country, it would be to them as life from the dead; it would save them from that vortex of degeneracy into which they are plunging, and in which with themselves they are merging the brightest hope of the friends of liberty throughout the world.

So far as offices are concerned we have merely to remark, that the Anti-Slavery party would have comparatively few to bestow. Before it could possibly reach that immense patronage, the prolific source of existing party corruption, it would be dissolved by the accomplishment of its object.

It is feared again, that the proposed measure would impede the progress of the cause by excluding from it the clergy, and, to a greater or less extent, the members of our churches. Such a result will as necessarily follow, in whatever way political action is made really effective. Parties that feel themselves endangered by the movement, will of course, by every possible expedient, endeavor to drive from the field all that will not submissively bow to their yoke. If human government is ordained of God, while its particular form and administration are left to the wisdom and hand of man, then is it the solemn duty of every one, to whom in any degree the care of it is committed, to exert all the power he may actually possess to correct its errors and to reform its abuses. And just in proportion as the character of the individual is more elevated and his office more holy, is he bound to endeavor by appropriate efforts to bring the whole structure of civil government into conformity with the great principles of the Divine administration. If any person may with propriety feel no interest, form no opinion, take no part in the conduct of public affairs, surely it is not he, who by habits of close thought and thorough investigation, is best qualified to form

correct opinions; and who by general integrity of character, can exert by example the widest influence. Good men in our country, have incurred a heavy responsibility by their neglect of the right of suffrage. By abstaining from the polls, they have done much to foster the idea, that religion and politics are to be kept forever separate,—that a devoted piety is not to be seen, where most of all its presence is needed, at the ballot box. What right have they to sigh over the corruptions of party, the mischief framed by law, the abominations committed in the high places of power, while they regard themselves as too holy to mingle with the people on the day of election, and do not by their example and efforts endeavor to secure the election of rulers, who shall be just men, haters of covetousness, and who will employ the power committed to them, for the glory of God and the public good. If on account of the ravings of the political demagogue, the fear of the loss of influence, they may, by a voluntary disfranchisement, neglect the sacred trust of the elective franchise, then may they as well adopt the principle of non-resistance at once, declare all authority of man over man a usurpation, eschew all politics, fold their arms in silent indifference, and let the wicked reign. For weal or for woe we have adopted the right of universal suffrage as a part of our political system. By all therefore that is precious in good government, by all that is fearful in anarchy and misrule, does it become the piety and morality of the land by its presence at the polls, to throw around the exercise of the elective franchise an elevating and purifying influence.

And if the good men of the land are ever called upon to exercise, without fail, the dearest right as well as the most important privilege of an American citizen—if the stern voice of duty may ever in tones not to be unheeded summon them to the polls, it is in a combined and vigorous effort to confer upon the enslaved millions of our countrymen the blessings of civil and religious freedom—to remove the one dark threatening cloud from our political horizon, and to avert the impending wrath of that God for the crying sin of our land, at the thought of whose justice, the mere philosopher and statesman turns pale, when he remembers that it can not sleep forever.

It is also objected that the proposed measure would be a violation of the constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and of the implied obligations of its members. This objection appears to us without foundation. In the declaration of sentiments issued by the Convention that formed the Constitution, it was declared, “that there are at the present time the highest obligations resting

upon the people of the free States, to remove slavery by moral and political action." In the preamble of the constitution, the society pledged itself to the whole country, to posterity, and to God, to do all that is *lawfully* in its power to bring about the extinction of slavery. The formation of a third party based upon the principles of the society, is certainly a *lawful* method for the extinction of slavery. In the progress of events it may become absolutely necessary to the attainment of the end contemplated by the society, without which its solemn pledge cannot be redeemed. The nomination of candidates for office did not probably occur to the founders of the society, as one of the measures which it might adopt. Most who have joined it, have done so without the expectation that any such measure would be adopted. The society moreover, has frequently disclaimed the intention of making itself a political organization. The question of duty is nevertheless an open one, to be decided by calm investigation and candid inquiry. Under existing circumstances, the measure, if adopted, should not we believe be adopted hastily and without the general consent of the members.

So far as the implied obligation of the members in their individual capacity is concerned, there cannot it would seem be any doubt. In joining the Anti-Slavery society, abolitionists have not surrendered any of their religious or civil rights. Among the latter is not merely the right of voting according to conscience, but of nominating the men on whom they will bestow their suffrages.

The duty of putting candidates for office in nomination, and managing the general concerns of a political campaign, would fall heavily upon the executive officers of the Anti-Slavery Society, and had better therefore, on the principle of a division of labor, be committed to other hands. In the great field of duty before us, there may be need of more than a single organization. Let associations be multiplied, so far as necessity or a sound expediency may require. We care not from how many points the enemy is assailed, provided there is order and concert in the battle, and none of our fire is thrown into our own ranks. Let the Anti-Slavery society, as such, stand aloof from any direct participation in the proposed, or any other mode of effecting the objects to be attained by political action. Let it confine itself to the high office of setting forth and illustrating the great truths for the promulgation of which it was established, and the duties resulting from them. Let it, as heretofore, send out its lecturers to plead the cause of the suffering and the dumb; and scatter broad-east over the land its invaluable publications, adapted to convince, to arouse—and, through the blessing of God, mighty

to the pulling down of the strong holds of slavery. While it abstains from prescribing the mode, or engaging in its official capacity in political action, let it proclaim fearlessly and uncompromisingly the duty of every abolitionist, possessing the elective franchise, to go to the polls and there deposit his vote for the slave. There has been of late a degree of hesitation on this subject, which ought not to exist. Resolutions have been adopted by Anti-Slavery societies, and even by this State society at its last meeting, virtually implying that to go to the polls in any case may be a sin. Exhortations have been given, implying in the connection in which they stand, that to carry our anti-slavery principles to the ballot box is a violation of our allegiance to God, an act of rebellion against his authority and government; but that if we are determined to sin in the matter of voting, consistency demands that we sin for the good of the slave.

We have most solemnly and distinctly announced it as our object, to remove the slave from the irresponsible despotism under which he is crushed, and place him under law, subject to its restraints and blessed with its protection. We recognize therefore, distinctly, the rightful authority of human government. And it is one of the most important aims of our great enterprise, to bring our National as well as State governments, to exercise the high powers with which they are rightfully clothed, for the good of the suffering bondman. We repeat then, let the duty of political action be affirmed without hesitation and without reserve. We do not advocate making the duty of voting a test of membership. We do insist, however, that the faith of the society on this important subject shall be unequivocally expressed. Leaving it to the few who cannot go with it in this matter, to adjust their relations to it according to their convictions of duty. If we may not in our anti-slavery capacity enforce the duty of political action, because there are friends of the cause who believe civil government an usurpation, neither can we for a similar reason enforce the duty of ecclesiastical action. We say it in all kindness to our friends who differ from us. Their rights of conscience we duly respect, and will not infringe. But to keep our own void of offence, we must admonish wrong doers in relation to the cause of the slave, whether in our own ranks or elsewhere, to cease from sin.

While we believe that a sound policy will, on the whole, require the Anti-Slavery Society to limit itself to inculcating the duty of political action, and to abstain from all recommendation or interference with the particular modes in which it shall be performed, we

cannot but rejoice in the evidence furnished by the signs of the times, that the absorbing question upon the political arena must soon be liberty or slavery. The suppression by the slave power of free debate in the Halls of Congress—the denial of the right of petition—the attempt to establish through the instrumentality of post-masters a censorship of the press—the securing to itself of all important offices under the General Government through which its interests may be effected—the manifest intention to make the foreign policy of the country subserve its purposes, as in the refusal to recognize the independence of Hayti, and the hasty and indecent recognition of Texas—the undisguised effort to wield the whole power of the Union for the promotion of its aims—the insolent demands of the slave States for the surrendry of the citizens of the free—the principles hostile to freedom unblushingly avowed by the civilians and statesmen of the South—the disturbing influence of slavery upon the business of the country—the danger to the public safety from the existence of three millions of slaves at the South—and the absolute incompatibility of slavery with the permanency of our free institutions—are all beginning to attract attention, and must ere long make the North feel that all other questions now the subjects of debate, are absolutely insignificant, when compared with the question of slavery. The elements of a Human Rights party are in a state of rapid formation—a party that will go for the great principles of the Declaration of Independence, for a genuine republicanism, for equal and impartial liberty. The conflict with slavery on the field of political action cannot long be deferred. On that field, the Anti-Slavery Society may not directly engage; but the light it has shed, the great principles it has inculcated, have prepared the way for the conflict, and nerved the hearts of those who shall there do battle for liberty. On that field, its prowess may not be displayed; though its voice will mingle with the shout of victory, as the approving friend of the cause.

#### SPEECH OF HENRY CLAY.

Among the events occurring within the limits of the year, and which deserve a passing notice, is the effort made by a distinguished statesman on the floor of the United States Senate, with the avowed intention of dissuading the public from any further agitation of the delicate question, and of arresting the progress of abolition. However painful to those who feel a pride in the reputation of the great statesmen of our country, history will record the humiliating fact,



that the champion of slavery on this occasion, was no other than the eloquent advocate of Grecian and South American independence.

In the speech of Mr. Clay, abolitionists are charged, as by more vulgar opponents, with fanaticism, recklessness, a total disregard to the rights of property, the peace of the country, and the perpetuity of the Union; while not a particle of proof is brought to sustain these high allegations. Objections, a thousand times repeated and as often refuted, are urged in the peculiarly flowing style of Mr. Clay; but not one new argument is advanced, not one new support is reared to sustain the falling fabric of American despotism. The reputation of the orator may have given a temporary influence to the gilded sophistry of the speech. There are few reflecting minds, however, even among the opponents of abolition, but must have arisen from its perusal with a feeling of disappointment. Its actual influence in the accomplishment of its professed object, is best told by the multiplied thousands of abolitionists in the course of the year, and the altered position of its author in regard to the great object of his high ambition.

The speech of Mr. Clay presents an additional instance of principles dangerous to the liberties of the country, adopted by leading southern minds, and promulgated in defence of slavery. The great truth that man cannot be the subject of property, or in other words, the fundamental doctrine of the Declaration of Independence, that to man, as man, belongs inalienably the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, Mr. Clay declares to be a "visionary dogma." And in his place in the American Senate, boldly lays down the monstrous principle, "that is property which the law declares to be property."

If the law declares human beings property, they are so, according to Mr. Clay, to all intents and purposes whatsoever. The color of the skin is nothing, diversity of race is nothing. The principle is absolute, and universal in its extension. Human legislation is above the Divine—the supreme and ultimate standard of rectitude. Let this principle be conceded, and who may not rightfully be made a slave? What form of despotism will not find its justification in it? The Autocrat of all the Russias, the Grand Turk himself would have smiled complacently upon the Republican orator, as he announced the principle, and, in extatic delight responded to it a hearty AMEN.

That a distinguished civilian as well as statesman should be driven to such a position, shows conclusively how dangerous to all rights, to the very end and aim of all good government, is the defence

of American slavery. If the right to property is based upon the will of the legislative power, and not upon principles of eternal rectitude independent of that will, then all property may be annihilated by law. What the law creates it may uncreate. It may undo its own work. And, at the voice of the brotherhood, from the very kennels of society, it may declare this exclusive holding of houses and lands and Bank stock, an unlawful monopoly, and proclaim an equal distribution of them among the people.

As a formidable obstacle to emancipation, Mr. Clay presents the amount of capital already created by his principle at the South, and which he estimates at the enormous amount of \$1200,000,000. There is something appalling in this estimate. Twelve hundred millions of personal, movable property, concentrated in the Southern States, and all devoted to a single interest !! If, as compared with this, the paltry sum of 5,000,000, wielded by a single bank, demands careful watching and all the safeguards human ingenuity can devise, to prevent its exerting a fatal influence upon elections, corrupting the people, and jeopardizing the liberties of the country; what dangers may not be expected from such a concentration of capital as this!—a capital owing its origin to essential violence and wrong, and requiring for its protection, the utter prostration of all right—the utter subversion of all the great principles of our free institutions ! That an intelligent statesman can look at this statement without alarm, yea advise his countrymen to feel no uneasiness on the subject, shows that this tremendous power has already gone far in the accomplishment of its work, and that liberty is about to expire in its unhallowed grasp. If ever in view of the dangers of American liberty, we may exclaim, “Ho, to the rescue,” and call upon every man yet free to speak and act, to arm himself for a death-struggle for the blood bought blessings of the Revolution, we may do it in view of the danger thus presented.

To the granting of all the objects for which we have petitioned, Mr. Clay objects either upon reasons nugatory in themselves, or which should furnish the occasion for urging them with seven fold vigor.

The power of Congress over the District, Mr. Clay maintains, is limited by the nature of the object for which it was ceded, viz. to provide an available, comfortable and convenient place, as a seat of Government for the whole Union.” Should it be requisite for the attainment of this end to abolish slavery in the District, it may be done. We thank Mr. Clay for this admission. In the Constitution of the United States the term slavery does not occur. Not even in

the very provision designed for its temporary protection. Is that a convenient place in which to hold our National council, where the foul system the Constitution blushed to own, is exposed continually to the public gaze, our shame and our reproach? Is a spot cursed with the tears and blood of the slave, a suitable place on which to erect the Capitol of the nation, bearing on its front the blazing inscription,—all men are created free and equal, and are endowed by their Creator with an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? Is that a comfortable place for the free representatives of the free States to defend the doctrines of the Revolution, where the mart for human sinews and blood, the prison house of the dealer in the bodies and souls of men, the manacled slave cofle as it passes on its way to the southern market,—all proclaim the foul hypocrisy of a nation, boasting its free institutions, while its foot is on the neck of three millions of slaves? Is that a comfortable spot for the Capitol of the nation, where visitors from all parts of the free States are continually met with scenes of brutal violence, and outrageous tyranny, sufficient to awaken the deepest emotions of horror in every generous bosom? Where they may not, in the presence of a certain portion of the inhabitants, respond to the talk about liberty uttered on the floor of Congress, and where a copy of the newspaper, that shall plead the cause of human rights, even accidentally found in their possession, may expose them to the inflictions of the code Lynch, or to imprisonment and death by due process of Law? Hundreds of thousands of the free citizens of the country, have already by their petitions responded in the negative, and let millions yet repeat the emphatic NO.

The only argument found by Mr. Clay against granting the prayer of the petitioners with reference to the admission of Florida as a slave State, is the spirit of that base compromise, by which the constitutional barriers, which before had arrested the extension of slavery, were broken down, and the triumph of wrong over right, of despotism over liberty was consummated, in the admission of Missouri into the Union as a slave State. The guilt of that transaction may not now be washed away. It will remain an everlasting monument of the base subserviency of Congress to the slave power. It may be some check to the rapid strides of that power to entire sway over all the rights and interests of the pliant North, if there be virtue enough yet left in the country, to disavow and set aside a compact, which never had a legal existence, and which can only be carried into effect over the prostrate rights of man, a violated conscience, and the broken law of God. Let us multiply a thousand

fold our petitions against the admission of Florida or any new slave State.

The power of Congress to regulate commerce between the States, under which the suppression of the slave trade between them is sought, Mr. Clay contends is inadequate to this object. A power to regulate, not implying a power so to regulate as to destroy. The shipping of the North rotting at our wharves, during the period of the non-intercourse and embargo, immediately preceding our last war with Great Britain,—measures which had the sanction of Mr. Clay—is evidence in point against his position. Under the power to regulate commerce with foreign nations, Congress has already abolished the foreign slave trade, by declaring it piracy. Under the same power in relation to the States, Congress can also destroy the no less piratical traffic in human beings, carried on coast-wise from Alexandria, the slave port of the District, and over land from all the northern slave States to the more southern. Slavery is now sustained in the northern slaveholding States, by the rearing of human chattels for the more southern. A business so disgraceful, that our Minister at the Court of St. James was compelled, for very shame, publicly to deny the undeniable fact in reference to his own State. Let us not cease our efforts until this infamous traffic be also declared piracy by Congress, and the vile traffickers, with their aiders and abettors, from the slave pen in the District, through all the ramifications of the trade, to the final disposal of its unhappy victims in the southern market, be regarded as they ought, enemies of the human race, and be treated accordingly. Possessing clearly the power, let Congress be petitioned with unceasing importunity until the work is accomplished.

It is not our intention at this late period to review the speech of Mr. Clay. We leave it with a few additional remarks.

To the question what will be the ultimate result of the slave system in our country, Mr. Clay has no answer to make. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. We have prospered under the existing system. Posterity will take care of itself. Blindly throwing himself upon the protection and blessing of that Providence, whose laws are disannulled, whose purposes for the elevation of the human race are continually opposed by it, he closes his eyes upon the dark future, and rushes on to the precipice, hoping for the best. “The question (he remarks) was asked fifty years ago, ‘what shall be done with the slaves.’ It will be asked fifty or a hundred years hence.” And in this respect Mr. Clay truly represents the leading politicians of the day. Admitting the evils of slavery, they see no method by

which it may be removed. With Henry Clay their advice to us is, to close our lips, and shut our eyes, and fold our arms, and trust in God. Trained to questions of mere party interest, they are unable to grapple with the great question of human rights. The extension of liberty to a greater number of the inhabitants of this land, than it contained when it broke the rod of British oppression, is, on account of the color of their skin, a problem too mighty for them. It is not then from the trained politicians of the day, that we are to expect either light or help. Deliverance to the slave must come from another quarter. From the people of the free States rising in the greatness of their strength, and putting in our Halls of Legislation men capable of comprehending the difference between a man and a thing, and who have been well instructed in these simple and elementary truths in politics and morals,—that man as such has rights, that these rights can never be violated with impunity, that it is always safe to repair error, to remedy wrong, and that justice is the highest expediency.

The occasion of the delivery of this speech is worthy of remark. So long as abolitionists were content quietly to promulgate their doctrines, and suffer without remonstrance their petitions to be interred in the tomb of the Capitol by the Committee on the District, Mr. Clay, it seems, could patiently bear their ill-advised and obtrusive philanthropy. But when they evinced a determination to carry their principles to the ballot box, Mr. Clay is aroused. And, mark his words, at this "*alarming stage of their proceedings*," he throws himself before the country to arrest the agitation, and, in mortal fear for the safety of the cherished institution, calls upon every man and woman too, and all that minister at the altar, to pause and consider the dreadful precipice down which the abolitionists would hurry them. The defender of slavery is not without reason seized with this terror of the ballot box. Let the important fact sink deep into the heart of every friend of the slave, possessing the inestimable privilege of the elective franchise.

The pro-slavery effort of the Kentucky orator, was met by the noble hearted Morris of Ohio, in a speech replete with sentiments worthy an American patriot and statesman; and which will remain to his lasting remembrance, when the advocates of slavery are forgotten. The State, it is true, that had the honor of being represented by the advocate of liberty in the Senate, when all other lips were closed, has proved itself unworthy of him. In obedience to the power that imposed on her willing neck the servile bill, as it is rightly termed, she recalled him. But he has gone, to use his own ex-

pressive language, "to light up the beacon fires of liberty on every hill in his State;" soon we trust to return with accumulated energy, to plead the cause of the oppressed and to vindicate their rights in the proud Capitol of the nation.

#### BRITISH W. INDIES.

The progress of events in the British W. Indies during the year, has been such as to cheer the heart of the philanthropist and infuse new energy into the effort for the universal extinction of slavery. The doctrine of immediate emancipation may now, by this decisive experiment, be considered as established upon a firm and immovable basis. The happy results of the great act of British justice have, with the best effects, been spread before large audiences in several of our cities by the Rev. Mr. Scoble, one of the early and efficient advocates of the cause in Great Britain; and who was on his return from a residence of two years in the islands, for the purpose of observing the workings of the new system. The valuable information communicated by Mr. Scoble, has been extensively copied by the more important religious and commercial papers. Notwithstanding the reluctance of the servile press of the North to admit the truth on this subject, a more correct knowledge of the real fruits of W. I. emancipation, is beginning to be generally diffused. It is already attracting the attention of Southern statesmen, if not to stimulate them to a similar act of justice to the bondmen of our land, at least to excite their fears for the permanency of slavery here. In a recent speech in Congress, urging the Government to increased efforts in its unholy war upon the Seminoles, Mr. Thompson of S. C. declares their extermination to be of vital importance to the security of the Southern States, on account of the proximity of Florida to the emancipated W. Indies.

#### FRENCH W. INDIES.

The course pursued by the British Government has excited a lively interest in France. Within the year a deputation has been sent out by the Ministry, for the purpose of collecting information in regard to the workings of emancipation in the British islands. And upon their report, a project of a law has been introduced into the Chamber of Deputies, for the prospective emancipation of the slaves in the French islands.

We regard this measure as one of the utmost importance. A system so essentially bad, so preeminently disgraceful, that even the monarchical governments of Europe are compelled by a sense of jus-

tice, and the irresistible force of public opinion, to remove it even from the very skirts of their dominions, cannot surely long be retained at the seat of Government, in a land boasting of its republicanism. With the example of successful emancipation constantly before it, the South will be compelled by a pressure it cannot much longer resist, to break also the yoke of her bondmen and let the oppressed in her borders go free.

#### CONGRESS.

A large number of abolition memorials have already, during the present session, been presented to Congress. A protracted debate has arisen upon the disposition to be made of them, from which essential advantage has accrued to the cause of the slave, if, as is undoubtedly the case, the remark of Senator Strange of S. C. be true, "that all agitation weakens the moral force in favor of the slaveholder."

From the apparent reluctance of the House to renew the gag, and the expressed convictions of many of the Southern members, that policy requires a course different from that hitherto pursued, we hoped that the sacred right of petition would not again in Congress, be laid a sacrifice on the altar of slavery. In this, however, we are disappointed. Since assembling in this place, intelligence has arrived of the adoption, by a vote of 114 to 108, of the following amendment to one of the standing rules of the House of Representatives of the American Congress.

"Provided, That no petition, memorial, resolution, or other paper praying the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, or any State or Territory, or the slave trade between the States or Territories of the U. S. in which it now exists, shall be RECEIVED BY THIS HOUSE OR ENTERTAINED IN ANY MANNER WHATEVER."

There is no evasion here—no professed respect for the right of petition, while in fact it is disregarded. The House have come up boldly and openly to the position, and made it a permanent rule of their body, that they will not, in a case of great national concernment, even *receive* the petitions of the people. The complete ascendancy of the slave power in Congress, is now placed beyond dispute. At the bidding of that power, one of the dearest of our natural and constitutional rights, and of our highest immunities as American citizens, is basely trampled in the dust. A despotism is now set up, which, if not immediately and effectually resisted, will soon put us

in a situation beneath the miserable serfs of Russia or the unfortunate victims of southern bondage itself. A government that shall deny the right of the people to lay before it their grievances—which shall spurn the prayers of its subjects, does thereby absolve them from their allegiance, if it contain within itself no provision by which its usurpations may be repressed, and its just functions restored. Happily such provision does exist in our government. Against this monstrous assumption of arbitrary power, therefore, let our remonstrances go up to Congress in tones not to be misunderstood. Let our State Legislature be invoked to apply whatever powers of persuasion and of instruction it may have, for the removal of this infamous regulation. Especially, through the ballot box let us not fail to apply, as soon as the opportunity shall present, the appropriate, the infallible remedy. The question does not concern us merely as abolitionists. A great fundamental principle of our free institutions is stricken down. If our rulers may declare that they will not receive our respectful petitions on any one subject in which our interests or rights are involved, they may, for the same reason, refuse to receive them upon all others. The power that may to-day refuse the reception of a petition upon the subject of slavery, may to-morrow, by the same right, refuse to listen to any remonstrance, or receive any memorial relating to a National Bank, a Sub-treasury, a Tariff, or any other question against which it may choose to shut its ears. The great issue is now distinctly made—Shall the North maintain unimpaired the precious blessings of civil liberty handed down to us by our fathers, or shall we put our necks under the yoke, tamely crouch beneath the burden of southern despotism, and submit to our masters?

In its war upon the Constitution in support of slavery, the South has always been indebted for success, to aid from the North. We blush to record the fact that of those, who, by their votes on the recent regulation, proved recreant to their avowed principles, and covered themselves with infamy, were two of the Representatives from Maine.

The vote, so far as the delegation from this State is concerned, is as follows;

Against the amendment, ANDERSON, CLIFFORD, DAVEE, EVANS, LOWELL, RANDALL.

For the amendment,

**Albert Smith,**  
**Virgil D. Parris.**

Of the professions of Virgil D. Parris previously to his election, we



are not informed. Albert Smith, it is well known, was elected by a bare majority of a few votes; and, unquestionably, in consequence of his returning a favorable answer to the questions propounded him by the Abolition Committee of his District, while his opponent declined any reply to their interrogations.

We ask attention to the following extract from the reply of Mr. Smith to that Committee.

“No man in this community can be more decidedly opposed to slavery in the abstract, or more deeply desire the freedom of the whole human family than myself. I would do as much as any other man, with the same means, legitimately, safely, and constitutionally to accomplish this object. I am moreover opposed unequivocally to the admission of Texas as a constituent part of this Union, whether it can be done constitutionally or not. *I am in favor, also, of the right of petition of the citizens of the United States to Congress in its broadest sense.*”

Pending his election then, in order to secure the votes at least of the abolitionists of his own political party, which were absolutely essential to his success, Mr. Smith declares himself, in the most unqualified terms, in favor of the right of petition. And yet, in one of his first official acts in Congress, he basely strikes down the right, in the very case in reference to which, he had solemnly pledged himself to maintain it in the **BROADEST SENSE!**

The course of Mr. S. furnishes melancholy proof of the flagrant treachery to which the mere political partizan will descend for the attainment of his ends. It shows conclusively that in such men no confidence can be placed. The time, it is evident, has come, when if abolitionists will be true to their sacred cause, they will vote for no man, whatever his professions, who has not given, in his anti-slavery character, the sure pledge that he may be trusted.

#### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, the Committee would express their increased confidence in the adaptation of our measures to accomplish the great object at which we aim. Whether that object shall indeed be attained, is known only to Him, before whose omniscient eye all events are spread out, and who knows the end from the beginning. Of one thing, however, we are fully assured. Our country cannot always be the land of the slave. Slavery must soon terminate, peaceably, and to the mutual advantage of all the parties concerned, or go out in oceans of blood. When by the steamboat and railroad the most distant parts of our land and the world are brought into immediate proximity, and facilities for intercommunication are indefinitely multiplied—when the power press is increasing beyond computa-

tion the means of general intelligence, and the mail is carrying it to every man's door—the slave surely cannot much longer be kept in that state of profound ignorance, absolutely essential to the continuance of slavery. And when we consider the deep infatuation of the South in her rabid efforts to recover her fugitives, who have tasted the blessings of equal rights at the North—her reeking licentiousness, which has sent coursing through the veins of her slave population no small portion of that blood, that in the days of the Revolution echoed back the cry, “Give me liberty or give me death”—can we believe the time far distant, when, degraded as the slaves now are, there will be minds among them to conceive, and hands that will dare strike for freedom? When we look at the thousands of fugitives from the South trained to arms in Canada—the increasing military strength of the Republic of Hayti—the emancipated West Indies, filled with a population rapidly rising in knowledge, and already deeply sympathizing with their brethren in bonds—can we doubt, should the spirit of insurrection once be roused in the bosom of the slave, the speedy accession to his cause of intelligence and military tact? And when we look at the successful resistance of a handful of Seminoles in the everglades of Florida, to the whole physical force of the Union, and see, that after the expenditure of thirty millions of money and the loss of thousands of lives, the only hope of this great nation for the extermination of this, so far as numbers are concerned, insignificant foe, is in the trained blood hounds of Cuba, our only friends and natural allies in this atrocious war—when we consider the aid which resistance would bring to the slave, from Canada, from the W. Indies, from the exasperated Indians upon our borders demanding the homes from which slavery has expelled them, and from Mexico demanding the territory it has wrested from her—with the sympathy of the civilized world upon his side,—can we for a moment regard the cause of the slave, should he by force attempt to recover his rights, either as hopeless or impracticable? To keep three millions of men in chains in this day is impossible. Slavery throughout the world is doomed. In our own country, we repeat, it must speedily terminate, peaceably, or in a convulsion to which the page of history has yet furnished no parallel. A convulsion in which will be mingled all the fiercest elements of deadly strife—indomitable pride, the lust of power, and malignant hate,—a sense of wrongs innumerable, and the fury of despair. The terrors of that day, when God shall no longer restrain his avenging hand,—when he shall rise in his indignation to visit such a nation as this, who can depict? There is yet a peradventure that the

terrors of that day may be averted. By timely repentance the nation may yet be saved. Though the sea rages and the billows are high, and our sky is overcast, and clouds of dark and ominous import skirt our horizon, and distant thunders utter their voices, and the noise of the tempest is fast approaching,—our bark has not yet gone down. With speedy skill and effort we may be saved. Let us then work as for our lives. Let the measures we have adopted, and which in some good degree have received the seal of the Divine approbation, be urged with renewed vigor. Let us cheerfully make the efforts and sacrifices, the exigency of the cause demands. Let the rich bring to it of their abundance, and the poor of their poverty. Let the gifted intellect and the generous heart engage alike in its promotion. By our firesides, in the social circle, at the ballot-box, and in the church, let us remember the slave. Let every tithe be brought into the store-house. And above all and more than all, let incessant prayer go up to Him, who ruleth in the Heavens, who turneth the heart of man as the rivers of water are turned,—if so be that our efforts may be brought to a happy issue,—the sweet notes of the trump of jubilee be heard through our land,—the bleeding bondman and his penitent master rejoice together in a common emancipation,—the judgments of Heaven be averted,—and our country purified from its guilt, cleansed from its greatest sin, become what it has falsely boasted to be, the asylum of the oppressed, the **HOME OF THE FREE.**

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PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
**MAINE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY,**  
AT ITS  
**Fifth Annual Meeting,**  
HELD IN HALLOWELL, FEB. 6, 1840.

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Agreeably to notice, the Maine Anti-Slavery Society held its Fifth Annual Meeting in the old South Meeting house, Hallowell, on the 6th inst. The President of the Society, Hon. S. M. Pond, took the Chair at 10 o'clock, A. M. The throne of grace was addressed by Rev. Mr. Adlam, of Hallowell.

On motion of Mr. Codding,—Voted that all persons present friendly to the cause of emancipation, be invited to take part in the proceedings of this meeting.

The following persons were chosen Committee of arrangements: Gen. Fessenden, Prof. Smyth, M. Hill, Jacob Southwick, D. B. Randall, B. F. Tefft H. E. Coburn.

On motion, the Corresponding Secretary, Prof. Smyth, commenced reading the Annual Report, and continued until nearly the close of the forenoon session; when it was voted that the remaining part of the Report be postponed until afternoon.

On motion, Voted that Gen. Appleton, J. Wallason, Paul Stickney, A. Willey, D. F. Harding, John Buck, and D. Thurston be a Committee to nominate officers of the Society for the ensuing year.

On motion of Gen. Appleton,—Voted to raise a Committee to consider and Report on the recent action of Congress in relation to the subject of rejecting petitions. Gen. Appleton, Seth May, and S. L. Pomeroy were chosen. Voted to adjourn to 2 o'clock, P. M.

#### THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

Society met agreeably to adjournment.—Prayer by Rev. Mr. Tefft.

The Corresponding Secretary finished reading the Annual Report—When, on motion of Mr. Codding, the Report was accepted and laid on the table for further action.

The Committee on the action of Congress, reported a petition to the Legislature of this State, which was accepted and laid on the table for signatures. Voted to adjourn to 6 1-2 o'clock, P. M.

#### THURSDAY EVENING.

Society met agreeably to adjournment. Prayer by Rev. Mr. Hathaway.

The Committee of Arrangements presented the following resolutions,

RESOLVED, That the main hope of success in the great cause we advocate, lies in the power of truth.

RESOLVED, That among the recent numerous indications of Divine favor to the holy cause of human rights, we regard with a deep sense of gratitude, the case of the Amistad, as highly adapted to bring home to many hearts—untouched before—the sacred claims of colored Americans.

RESOLVED, That while we would give utterance to the pleasing emotions occasioned by the decision of Judge Judson, giving deliverance to Cinques and his companions in woe; we feel called on to dissent utterly from the principles upon which the Boy Antonio is to be surrendered to Spain as a Slave, as false in Law, and thus heaping on our country, already sinking under its hypocrisy and guilt, additional reproach.

The first of these resolutions was sustained at length by Rev. S. L. Pomeroy, and adopted. The two last, on motion of Mr. Codding, were ordered to lie on the table for the present.

The following resolution was then presented by the Committee, and sustained by Messrs. Tefft and Remond, and adopted.

RESOLVED, That in consideration of the mutual relation which slavery on the one part and northern influence on the other, bear to each other, the former cannot long exist without the support of the latter.

Voted to adjourn, to meet at this place tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

#### FRIDAY MORNING.

Society met agreeably to adjournment.—Prayer by Rev. Mr. Robinson.

The resolutions on the Amistad case were taken up, discussed at length by Gen. Fessenden, and adopted.

The Committee of Arrangements presented the following resolution which was adopted.

RESOLVED, That we anticipate great good to the cause of the Slave from the Convention of abolitionists for the World, to be holden in London in June next, and deem it proper that this Society should be represented in this Convention by one or more delegates.

A Committee of three, consisting of Messrs. Randall, Smyth, and Gilman were appointed to nominate delegates to the Convention.

The Committee then reported the preamble and resolutions following, the first of which was discussed at length by Messrs. Hathaway, Fessenden, Cordis, and Tappan; and the second by Messrs. Coddington, Hathaway, Tefft, Pomeroy, Fessenden, and Thurston; and adopted.

Whereas the great object which God had in view in instituting a church and a ministry on the earth, was the promotion of his Glory in their obedience to his holy requirements and in their efforts to bring all men unto the same obedience. And whereas American Slavery, so far as its operation extends, thwarts this very object; it being the fundamental principle of slavery that the slave owes obedience to the master prior to any other being in the universe, created or uncreated. Wherefore,

RESOLVED, That those ministers and churches who exert the least influence, either positively or negatively, for the support of American Slavery, exert an influence to thwart directly and utterly the great object, for the promotion of which the church and ministry were instituted.

RESOLVED, That it is the duty of abolitionists to vote for such men for rulers, and such only, as have given in their Anti-Slavery character a pledge that they regard the question of slavery as paramount to any question of mere national expediency, however important, and that they will go to the verge of their constitutional power for its abolition.

#### FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

Society met agreeably to adjournment.—Prayer by Rev. Mr. Trafton.

The Committee on finance presented the following resolution,

RESOLVED, That a Committee be appointed to take pledges and subscriptions on the present occasion to relieve this Society from its present embarrassment.

A Committee of six was chosen to carry the resolution into effect. The Committee then presented the following resolution,

RESOLVED, That we still entertain a high sense of the importance of sustaining an Anti-slavery paper, as the organ of communication for the abolitionists of this State, and therefore recommend to their cordial support the "ADVOCATE OF FREEDOM."

The vital importance of the paper to the A. S. cause in the State, was urged by several speakers and the resolution was unanimously adopted.

The Committee on the action of Congress, presented the following resolution, which was adopted.

RESOLVED, That while we approve of the stand taken by the Hon. Messrs. Evans, Davee, Anderson, Randall, Clifford, and Lowell, Representatives in Congress from this State, in behalf of the sacred right of petition, by giving their votes against the standing rule of the House of Representatives, which forbids the reception of abolition petitions, we cannot but look with mingled feelings of sorrow and indignation upon the base subserviency to southern slavery of Albert Smith and Virgil D. Parris, by giving their votes in favor of that rule, thereby treading under their feet one of the dearest national rights of their constituents.

The Committee on nominations reported the following list of officers for the ensuing year, which was accepted, and the gentlemen therein named severally chosen.

SAMUEL FESSENDEN, *President.*

WILLIAM SMYTH, *Corresponding Secretary.*

STEPHEN SEWALL, *Recording Secretary.*

S. K. GILMAN, Hallowell,—*Treasurer.*

#### VICE PRESIDENTS.

DANIEL APPLETON, York—ZADOK HUMPHREY, Cumberland—  
DANIEL F. HARDING, Lincoln—SAM'L F. BROWN, Oxford—SETH  
MAY, Kennebec—ANTHONY WOODWARD, Penobscot—JAMES GILPAT-  
RICK, Hancock—HIRAM BELCHER, Franklin—SAM'L HUTCHINGS,  
Somerset—WM. STEPHENS, Piscataquis—BENJ. JONES, Waldo—  
W. A. CROCKER, Washington.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

EDWARD SOUTHWICK, Augusta.	DAVID THURSTON, Winthrop.
WILLIAM PRESCOTT, Hallowell.	D. B. RANDALL, Kent's Hill.
PAUL STICKNEY, " "	AUSTIN WILLEY, Hallowell.

The following resolutions were presented by the Committee of Arrangements, discussed by Gen. Fessenden and Rev. Mr. Hathaway, and adopted.

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of this Society that the existence of slavery in the District of Columbia, is a flagrant violation of the Constitution of the United States and is therefore null and void.

RESOLVED, That the American Anti-Slavery Society be respectfully requested

to take measures, at their earliest convenience, to bring the question of the constitutionality of slavery in said District before the Supreme Court of the United States for adjudication.

On motion of Prof. Smyth, the following resolution was unanimously adopted by a rising vote.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Society be tendered to the Hon. Samuel M. Pond for the faithful and able manner in which he has performed the duties of President since the formation of this Society, and that he retires with the best wishes of all the members for his happiness.

On Motion—Voted, that the Report of the Corresponding Secretary be placed in the hands of the Executive Com. for publication.

The Committee on the subject of delegates to the Convention at London, reported the following persons as delegates, viz. S. L. Pomeroy, B. F. Tefft, and C. L. Remond. Report accepted.

Voted, That the call of the American Society on this Society be referred to the Executive Committee, and that they be authorized to permit the American Society to send its agents into this State.

Voted to adjourn to 6 1-2 o'clock, P. M.

#### FRIDAY EVENING.

Society met agreeably to adjournment.—The President, Samuel Fessenden, Esq. in the chair.—Prayer by Rev. Mr. Chapman.

On motion—Voted, that the thanks of this Society be presented to those individuals, who so liberally contributed to establish a Book Depository, and that the Secretary be instructed to communicate this vote to the liberal donors.

The following resolution was presented by the Committee of Arrangements, sustained by Messrs. Lovejoy, Remond, Pomeroy, and Trafton, and adopted.

RESOLVED, In order to think, feel, and act rightly in regard to slavery, we must often and accurately survey its influence upon both master and slave.

The following resolutions were presented by the Committee and unanimously adopted.

RESOLVED, That we earnestly entreat our friends in this State, not to forget to observe regularly the monthly concert of prayer for the enslaved.

RESOLVED, That this society appreciates the high importance of sustaining the operations of the Parent Society, and that it will cheerfully raise the sum assessed upon it, at the recent Special meeting of that society, to relieve it from its present embarrassment.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of the Society be given to the families of this Village who have so kindly received and hospitably entertained us on this occasion.

RESOLVED, That we commend with grateful emotion the kindness to the Slave, manifested by the proprietors of this House in tendering it to this Society for their annual meeting.

The Committee appointed to make a roll of the delegates, reported the names of two hundred and twenty five delegates and friends of the cause present.

Adjourned *sine die*.